

Museum search yielded data on U.S. war veterans

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. government's first comprehensive search of Korean War artifacts in North Korea's main war museum yielded identifying information on more than 100 American troops.

Analysts studying the information, including photographs and other documentation, "recognized a handful of names" as those of missing American servicemen, said Larry Greer, a spokesman for the Pentagon's POW-MIA office.

Greer said he could not reveal any among this small number of names because relatives have not yet been notified. The analysis is continuing, he said, and it is not yet clear

whether the information will help account for the men.

More than 8,100 American servicemen are listed as unaccounted for from the 1950-53 war in which U.S. forces fought on South Korea's side. In recent months the communist North Korean government, which for decades ignored questions about missing Americans, has begun cooperating by allowing U.S. battlefield searches for human remains and granting access to the war museum.

A five-person research team from the Defense and State departments spent a total of 25 hours in the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum in Pyongyang Aug. 4-

8. Some individual Americans had made limited visits before, but this was the first detailed examination of all 89 display rooms, Greer said.

One member of the U.S. team, Army Lt. Col. Elizabeth Checchia, said in an interview last week that among the items the members saw were U.S. military identification cards with photographs, servicemen's "dog tags," drivers licenses and other documents that contain the names of roughly 40 American servicemen.

In addition, she said, a museum display devoted to wartime propaganda included documents with lists of U.S. servicemen's names — presumably prisoners

of war. These included written appeals by servicemen to end the war and letters that captured Americans had written for delivery to their families. Ms. Checchia estimated that 100 or more servicemen are identified in these documents.

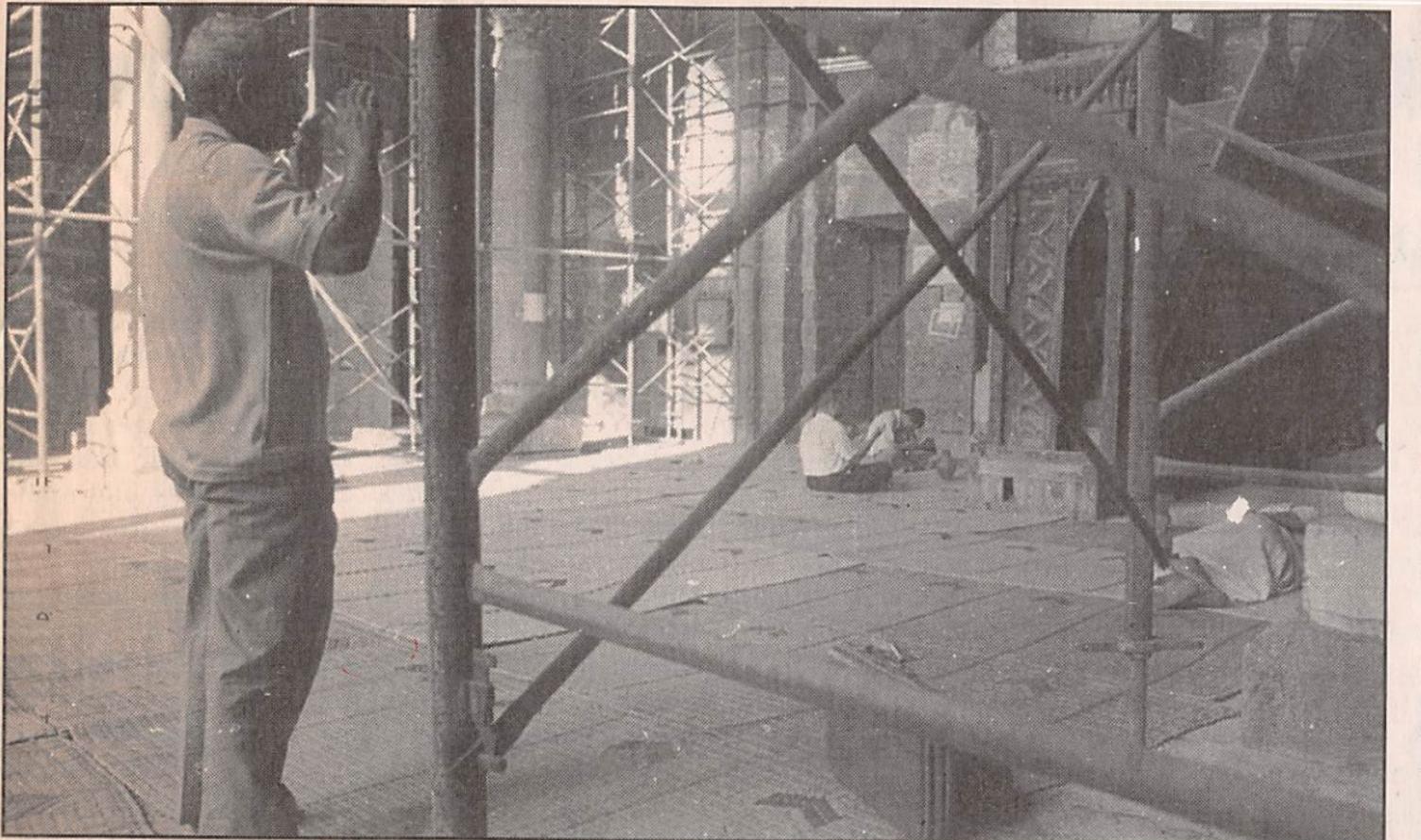
The U.S. researchers photographed or recorded the names from these documents and also noted serial numbers and other information from weapons and other captured American war material on display in the museum's basement, she said. She said the North Korean hosts cooperated fully with the researchers.

"This really was unprecedented" access, Ms. Checchia

said.

One museum display illustrates North Korea's longstanding charge that U.S. forces engaged in biological warfare. On display are handwritten confessions from American POWs admitting to germ warfare, she said. After the war these men said they had made false confessions after being tortured by their captors.

Most servicemen listed as unaccounted for from Korea are known to have died but their bodies have not been recovered. In some cases, however, their fate is still in doubt, and it remains possible that a small number of the missing could be alive in North Korea.



ERIC MARTI/The Associated Press

Crumbling history: A worker takes a break to pray surrounded by scaffolding used to restore the

City collapsing amid urge

Egypt to spend \$9 million restoring some structures

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — Sewer water creeps several yards up the limestone walls of the 700-year-old Islamic school, eroding the precious inscriptions adorning one of Cairo's architectural jewels.

Fissures as deep as 2 inches scar the walls of the building. Flakes fall from the stone blocks when they are merely tapped with a pen.

The remnants of medieval Cairo, once the seat of an empire stretching from Sudan to Syria, are crumbling, victims of a leaky sewer system, rumbling traffic and choking pollution.

"In 20 years time there will not be a single minaret standing," warns Costante Muzio of the

United Nations

ing a rescue plan for critical areas of the city. The Egyptian government, along with teams from the United States and Germany, is working to save specific treasures. But even those involved in the efforts admit the task is overwhelming.

The damage is apparent at one of the most important medieval treasures, a complex built by Sultan Qalawun who rose from slavery to found a dynasty that ruled Egypt for a hundred years in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Some of the arched vaults at the Qalawun school have cracks a yard long. In the sultan's tomb, the brown, red and white geometric mosaics on some of the walls are buckling